

Luca

September 10, 1959

Equivalent  
by tape  
SEP 18 1959

Dear Luca:

I -- we-- have been thinking of writing for some time but have all the usual excuses for delay. All sorts of "new" things are going on in a small domestic way. For example this letter is typed with a brand new Olympia small portable typewriter. We decided to trade in our Olivetti, which was getting worn out very quickly. I must say that this seems to be a much better machine, though it weighs the same, and costs a bit less than the Olivetti-Lettera. You might want to try this yourself. (We also got one of the standard Olympia portables which is a very well-known and rugged apparatus; but I couldn't resist getting this too when I saw it.)

The other thing that's new is that we finally got a new car, after postponing it so long. We were so undecided for a long time, but we finally settled for a 1959 Studebaker Lark station wagon. This is a somewhat smaller car than the current Fords & Chevrolets (about the size of the larger new Fiats) and we thought it would be a real advantage to have a station-wagon, considering how much moving we still have to do. It has bright red upholstery inside that I am sure will appeal to your latin spirit; it does ours! We sold our old Dodge immediately to Dr. Makela, a postdoctoral fellow from Finland who was glad to have a sound if oldish car at a favorable price. Peter Sneath is right now driving your erstwhile Plymouth back across the country on his way home. He seems to have been very happy with it.

This week we are also moving into a small (but new) rental house near the school. We will have to live here until our own house is built. We are just working on the plans now, and it probably will be next spring or summer before it can be ready. So far we have been renting one of the faculty houses on campus, but the owners are returning in a few days and we had to plan to move again. The new place (address: 715 Partridge Ave., Menlo Park, Calif.) is quite attractive in many ways for a rental, but it is rather small and we will have some difficulty fitting in all the furniture that should arrive soon from Sweden.

Finally, we have also just moved into our permanent labs in the medical center, which is actually not yet quite finished. They are very nice labs though we had to make some expedients since we arranged to move only after the building plans had been fixed. It is a particular pleasure to be so close to Kornberg and Dale Kaiser and all the others.

There is nothing remarkable to tell you about in the lab except for the business about ~~XXXX~~ F-prime mutants, i.e., clones in which F is attached to a small chromosome segment ~~whixxxxx~~ whose genes are then 'transduced' along with F at cytogamy. The resulting heterogenotes make an especially convenient way to study position effects, etc. Unfortunately they are somewhat unstable, so that spontaneous segregation would interfere with quantitative studies on the rate of loss of the F-linked genes say after radiation. I am busy myself with some new techniques for specific isolation of genotypes, and with various joint problems. We have rather a large group this year-- perhaps too many for me to spend as much time as I would like on my own problems.

Luca-- I realize that we may have sounded somewhat lukewarm about the proposal for a consultantship with your department. ~~XXX~~ If so, this would have been because of a need to consider some of the implications, though many of these would be obviously the most favorable. As matters now stand, I would be really disappointed if it doesn't work out, and we hope it will be possible. We are looking forward anyhow to seeing Gio' -- when will this be if he makes his planned trip? We will be delighted to show him our new labs -- and would you tell him that our new phone number is Davenport 1-1200, Ext. 5052; at home: DA-2-0686.

As we indicated before I would prefer an arrangement that would not require an abrupt disconnection of my relationships with Bristol Labs. However, I am now connected with a rather particular project that has no direct overlap with any of the things you are doing in Pavia at present, and I do not believe there can be any basis for anxiety. Also as we already discussed, I would be eager to have a direct rapport with you and Gio' and the department in preference to the Schering Corporation as such. (By the way when I realized they had the intelligence to be covering your work I bought a few shares of their stock, and this has not been disappointing, the present momentary slump notwithstanding.) As one of the (very minor!) owners of Schering I am also very keen on the program you and Gio' proposed. All joking aside, we do look forward to the successful outcome of your discussion with the Schering people.

We imagine you are still living in uncertainty if the genetics-professorial-selection committee has the dubious complexion you mentioned. What a shame! But how can it not turn out favorably as far as you are concerned.

Anyhow, will you be able to think soon of your plans for next summer? We are very eager to see you again, and especially here in our new environment, which you and Alba will surely enjoy as much as we do. I don't have to press you for a firm decision just yet, though I have just been taking it for granted that you will have the sense to come.

Did you get the o - 3 system to work to any advantage to you? (Alan, by the way is in the Army now, and after basic training was assigned to Fort Detrick: he'll be working in a lab doing virus chemistry of some sort.

As ever,

P.S. Have you sent the  
Florentini boxes & <sup>Maggione</sup> ~~Gargano~~  
yet?

